

Appl. No. 10/080,150
Amdt. dated July 16, 2003
Reply to Office action of June 19, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This election is in response to the Office Action mailed June 19, 2003. In the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the application contains claims directed to three patently distinct inventions as follows:

- I. Claims 1-5, drawn to a pressure vessel, classified in class 118, subclass 50.
- II. Claims 6-9, drawn to a continuous treatment apparatus, classified in class 414, subclass 805.
- III. Claims 10-14, drawn to a pressure furnace, classified in class 219, subclass 388.

Applicant elects invention II, claims 6-9, without traverse.

Before examination, applicant requests entry of the above presented amendments.

The examiner found invention I, claims 1-5, to be distinct from invention II, claims 6-9, because invention II does not require a sealable port. Applicant has amended claim 1 to delete the limitation of a sealable port. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-5 as amended are drawn to invention II.

The examiner found invention III, claims 10-14, to be distinct from invention II, claims 6-9, because invention II does not require a heater or heating means. Applicant has amended claim 10 to delete the limitation of a heater or heating means. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 10-14 as amended are drawn to invention II.

Applicant has added new claims 15 and 16 that depend from claim 10 and new claim 17 that depends from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that the new claims are drawn to invention II.

In view of the examiner's restriction requirement, applicant retains the right to present claims to inventions II and III in one or more divisional applications.

Applicant respectfully requests examination on the merits of claims 1-17.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: July 16, 2003

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